

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

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I CAME TO the end of my space last month with Sjt. Cooper, whose diary of the Peninsular war I was examining, ill at Guarda. "How long I was there, I know not but rallying again, I was sent off with others on a bullock cart to Celorica, fifteen miles distant. We got on tolerably well until our bullocks took it into their heads to run away. However, the animals stopped when out of breath." The result was "another severe relapse of fever". That was in 1810.

Three years later, after the battle of Pamplona,¹ Cooper was again sent back from the line "in a hot fit of ague". Here he took charge of two officers of his regiment who were mortally wounded. After their death, because "one of my oldest comrades was lying wounded in the next house, soon as possible I set off to see him, carrying some tea, etc. I found him in a large room that was full of wounded—all bad cases. His thigh was broken. I saw that my attention, and his own condition, affected him." "I think," says Cooper, "there was a starting tear in the poor fellow's eye." But he adds firmly, "he might probably recollect his bad behaviour to me on two occasions." Next to him "was a comrade serjeant named Bishop, sadly disfigured with blood and bandages".

This man's wife had "accompanied him in the Peninsula

¹ In 1831 the Duke of Wellington observed, "Those fortresses were got by the enemy in the most infamous manner. Pamplona they took by snow—the garrison were playing at snowballs, and the enemy advanced under pretence of joining in the sport."

for about three or four years". She was not the only woman thus attached to the Army, but as she later left Bishop for a Colonel and had previously been married to a drummer, her military career may be said to have embraced, and that literally, more ranks than most. Cooper records that, at the battle of Toulouse, "a poor fellow I had been talking to at the bridge was now borne along, his leg hanging by a bit of flesh. His wife was killed at Salamanca." At Ustaritz, in one of the most smiling Pyrenean valleys, a soldier's wife, "with two greyhounds in a string, slipt into the river and would have perished had not the dogs saved her by swimming to the shore," and in 1809, another soldier's wife, "after passing through an immense forest of pine trees, nearly all of which were remarkably crooked, was delivered of a child after we had halted for the night. Next morning, she was placed on a horse and marched with the column."

Wives, it will be seen, turn up frequently in the diary; but rarely, it seems to me, where one might expect them in the field. If one is surprised at Mrs. Bishop getting herself "flogged on the breech" for stealing, and at another woman trailing greyhounds through the Pyrenees, one is at least as much surprised to find that neither they nor any of the others appear to have bethought them of such occupations as cooking, nursing, or laundering. The men did these things for themselves. Though married, the women's position was, it is to be presumed, unofficial.

It is true that when Cooper was in hospital at Villa Vicosa, a "woman belonging to our regiment passed my bed". He called to her, gave her some loaves, and asked her to bring a little tea. She took the loaves but "forgot to bring the tea, though she often went by my couch of dried fern". As for cooking, feminine attention might have avoided his unfortunate experience with some captured meal. He tried to make dumplings of it, but

"when boiled, they looked like little frightened hedgehogs" and "to get a mouthful, I had to pick lots of prickles from the mass"—for the meal turned out to be unsifted barley meal, intended for cavalry!

However if A.T.S., N.A.A.F.I., and the other forms of regimentation which our age of freedom has evolved, have altered this aspect of the Army, in others it remains much the same. Here is a type still familiar. "Clapham generally had plenty to eat; but where he got his eatables was quite another thing. He did not tell everyone." There is "a brother serjeant, a morose fellow, and no friend of mine". When he was wounded, Cooper helped him up on the adjutant's horse. "He was shot in the loins or spine. I think he died. Why he was my enemy I never knew"—but, again, we all to our pain have known such. And there is Jack Styles who has been, surely, a member of the British Army from pre-Pistol days to modern tank-times—Jack Styles who "had heard of Heaven and Hell", so "lend me a coin and I'll toss up and see which is my place if I fall".

Wellington had determined to make another grand effort to take Sebastian. "Accordingly, an order was given to every regiment in our division to send one serjeant, one corporal, and twenty privates to assist in storming this strong place." Cooper volunteered, so did "an old corporal, Jack Styles by name". He fell, "severely wounded by a musket ball through the knee joint. The struggle was very severe; but our troops succeeded. The town was captured. The old veteran was taken to hospital and told that his leg must be amputated next morning. But when the doctors came, Jack was drunk and said that he and his leg should not be parted. The medical men left him and his leg mended in a contracted state. When strong, he joined us in France. He was a cripple, but did his duty as before and was present afterwards at the

battles of Orthes and Toulouse. Poor old Styles loved drink too well, and had at different times received about two thousand lashes."

That, however, was not so much, as things went. It might only have meant four floggings. "I saw a poor sickly fellow, more fit for the hospital than the triangles, receive 500 lashes at once. His crime was stealing from his comrade." In some cases, "half the sentence was inflicted at once and the remainder when the culprit's back was healed. It may be imagined that the second lashing would be worse than the first." A refinement, the "glasshouse" of the day, was a practice, "most fearful," of flogging by beat of drum. "Ten taps were beaten between each stroke. Many were lashed into insensibility and one, who was a Brunswicker, into insanity. It required," says Cooper, "strong nerves to look on. Indeed, many fainted during these prolonged punishments."

His own opinion on the necessity of them I quoted last month, and it is of interest to notice that his complaints and his concern are mainly with that apparently chronic grouse of the British soldier—food, poor quality of. An entry for 4th November, 1811—"quartered in Campillo, where hunger drove us to seek and eat roasted acorns"—is perhaps an extreme instance. But time and again eatables were short. Thus, after the battle of Vittoria, having taken possession of some hundreds of bullocks and sheep which the enemy had abandoned, "all set to work with coats off and sleeves up. Some killed sheep; others made fat dumplings. A party here was frying chops; another party there smoking tobacco; all happy as princes. At a distance, a selfish few, who had found or had stolen a cask of rum, were drinking copiously." But Sjt. Cooper does not allow these to be happy. It "speedily put them to sleep". Is he, it is possible to wonder, something of a non-commissioned prig—or does he, perhaps, "edit" his notes

with his late-Victorian audience in view? Jack Styles had loved drink "too well"—nevertheless, it had saved his leg—and the rum-drinkers are accused of stealing, though that might have been laid at the door of the sheep-killers and tobacco-smokers as well. The answer is probably not fermented but sour grapes. "Being orderly serjeant, I went not near them." "But I was not idle. I killed three sheep as my share," which seems reasonable, "and baked, or rather burned, several loaves, after which I milked some goats and had a splendid supper."

In 1813, "for the first time in the Peninsula, we kept Christmas. Every man contributed some money, meat, or wine. A sheep or two were bought and killed. Pies and puddings were baked. For desert (*sic*) we had plenty of apples, and for a finish two or three bandsmen played merry tunes, while many warmed their toes by dancing jigs and reels." These were gala occasions. Usually, the tale is of what he calls "stomach complaints". At the battle of the Pyrenees, "we were worn out with fatigue and ravenous with hunger... about noon next day we were favoured with some biscuit"—and it is to be noted that Cooper only uses "favoured" to denote scorn. Thus, when he came off duty and was immediately sent to gather some logs, which "logs" had first to be hewn, as they were growing trees, the officer "favoured" him with that unrelished order. Anything that was unpleasant, either too much or too little, was a "favour"—in which we can recognize the tone of to-day's "you've had it". On the retreat to Badajoz, "notwithstanding our weak state through want of food, we had to drag the artillery by ropes up some steep mountains, as horses could not keep on their feet. Men looked like skeletons. Our clothing was in rags and no bread was served out for six days."

In this connection, it is interesting that Wellington was of the opinion that his army was well-fed. As recorded by

Stanhope in his *Conversations*, saying that he had lost 36,000 men in six years in the Peninsular wars, the Duke added, "it would have been infinitely greater but for attention to subsistence. The French armies were made to take their chance and to live as they could and their loss of men was immense". This comes out clearly in de Rocca's *Memoirs*, translated by Maria Graham and published by John Murray in 1815: "On entering Portugal as on quitting it, the French found nothing but deserted towns and empty habitations where there were no provisions." The truth would seem to be that by comparison with the French, the British were well-fed, but it was a poor comparison, and Sjt. Cooper was not in possession of those facts about the enemy army which would have enabled him to make it. He admits that it was in 1806 that "a man should have parted with half his stomach when he entered a soldier's life". Rations in England and Ireland then were a pound and a half of bread, three-quarters of a pound of beef, bone included, for twenty-four hours. "Picking of teeth" in Cooper's phrase, "was not at that time much practised or wanted."

In 1809, abroad, "we were allowed a pound and a half of soft bread, or one pound of biscuit; one pound of beef or mutton; one pint of wine; but no vegetables." Sometimes they were reduced to half-rations "and when bread could not be obtained, we got a pint of unground wheat, or a sheaf from the fields or else two pounds of potatoes". There were "no breakfasts, no suppers, no coffee, no sugar in those days". Nevertheless, Cooper admits fairly enough that supplies improved and, after Torres Vedras, rations were more regularly issued.

The same was true of sleeping arrangements. At the beginning, "tents during this campaign we had none, nor yet blankets," but early in 1813—that is, four years later—there "arrived from England some troops of Life Guards

and Horse Guards Blues, with tents and blankets for all the army". These were issued in May, "at the rate of three tents to a company. The number in each tent was generally about twenty. When these were all laid, none could turn without general consent and the word 'turn' given." When weather was stormy "it sometimes happened that the tent pole broke"; this occurred one "dark wet night" on the slopes of La Rhune. "While a storm raged, the top of the tent pole burst through the rotten cap and down came the dripping tent upon us, with the firelocks, belts, pouches, caps, etc.. in glorious confusion. Some laughed, others did worse. It was no joke"—as those will appreciate who have, like myself, been caught in a storm on La Rhune; even without being, as were Cooper and his comrades, "all naked."

On the siege of Almeida and battle of Albuera, it is again possible to compare Cooper's *Rough Notes* with Wellington's *Conversations*. The former records that "a shell from the French fell into the powder magazine, which was near the ramparts, and blew it up, with some scores of houses near it, thereby making a way for the enemy to enter". A quarter of a century later, Wellington told Stanhope that "it was this blowing up of Almeida and my waiting to see if it would be repaired, that made me too late for Albuera".

The Serjeant in the 7th Royal Fusiliers did not know that; "Wellington arrived from the north of Portugal a few hours after the battle. Had he come sooner we should have had more confidence of victory." Of this, in his turn, Wellington was aware. "Had I been there, we should have made a great thing of it. Marshal Beresford had not as much as myself the habit of responsibility and chief command nor of course, in the same degree, the confidence of the troops. He therefore could not do so much." Further, "I remember he wrote me word that he was

delighted I was coming, that he could not stand the slaughter about him and the vast responsibility. His letter was quite in a desponding tone."

How great was that confidence of the troops enjoyed by Wellington, Cooper frequently shows. At the battle of Busacco, "Wellington and his Staff rode along the line, in full view of the enemy, and were received with great cheering." At the battle of Vittoria, "This quickens our steps and pulses. Wellington and his Staff gallops to a hill in our front and orders up six pieces of artillery, which instantly began blazing away at the enemy, now in full and hasty retreat, Wellington in the meantime glassing the total route of the foe with great earnestness." At the battle of Toulouse, there is a particularly vivid glimpse. "Having had several of my accoutrements stolen, I went among the dead to select such as I wanted. One of the 42nd, or Highland Watch, had a belt that suited me. I also wanted a bayonet, therefore I went in search of one nearer the enemy's skirmishers; but the balls came too thickly to invite my stay there. I looked behind me and saw Lord Wellington riding along the ridge. I knew then the game the enemy aimed at. He took no notice of the whiz, but rode on."

Being now on the field of battle, we may take notice of Cooper's descriptions of fighting. In these he "was greatly assisted by having access to the Regimental Orderly Book". He tells of a night-march, which must have presented an eerie spectacle. "We continued long after dark, stumbling among rocks and stones, the rain still falling and the men silent and knocked up. Several, who had wax candles, lighted them, and we marched by their light." At the battle of Talavera, on the anniversary of which I write, "dawn saw more than 100,000 men standing ready to slay one another. None but those who have been in similar circumstances can even guess what is felt." (The

same thought occurred to him at the battle of Vittoria, "the 21st of June saw 120,000 healthy men rise from their cold beds and prepare to slaughter one another," but here, being now a seasoned soldier, he replaces philosophy with the reflection that "a cup of coffee would have been a treat".)

Talavera did not start off too well. "We retired upon our regiment, which sprung up and met the enemy on rising ground, but our men being all raw soldiers, staggered for a moment under such a rolling fire. Our colonel, Sir William Myers, seeing this, sprang from his horse, and snatching one of the colours cried 'Come on, Fusiliers'. 'Twas enough. In a few minutes, the enemy melted away." Later, "the British guards (*sic*) were brought up, who charged the enemy and swept them back instantly, but pursuing them too far, they suffered heavily before support came up. This was seen by Wellington, who immediately sent forward a fresh body. These in turn charged so roughly that the enemy retired precipitately, leaving heaps of dead and wounded." Again, "in the course of the day, the 6th Dragoons made a dashing charge at the French cavalry but not being aware of a deep ravine between them and the enemy, they went headlong down into it. Not disheartened, the unhurt men galloped up the opposite bank and charged through the enemy's ranks, then wheeling about, they gallantly cut their way back. This was not done without great loss." Then, says Cooper, "the battle now languished. both armies were weary," and during the night, the foe retreated.

After this, as I related, Cooper fell ill. On his rejoining his regiment, there was a pleasing incident, drily told. He and other convalescents had been issued with fresh kit at Elvas, but on arrival at Guarda, the Fusiliers' headquarters, their knapsacks were "lighter" than when they started. "Blankets, greatcoats, shirts, etc., had been sold

on the march and turned into bread, wine, etc." They were inspected, the Colonel having a list of what had been issued to them. "'Where is your blanket?'" "Stolen, sir." "How?" "I was cook that day, sir, and while fetching water, it disappeared." "Indeed." Then, speaking to the second, "Where is your greatcoat?" "Lost in quarters, sir." "Very strange." Speaking to the third respecting his missing shirt, the answer was, "Worn out, sir." The Colonel smiled. We knew that smile. There was bitterness in it. At last he sarcastically said, "It astonishes me that you Light Company Men, sly and keen as you are, should have been so unfortunate." What astonished us was that we escaped flogging."

At the battle of Busacco, we read that "while the contest was raging, sixteen or seventeen deserters, chiefly Germans, came over to us". In the enemy's retreat of 1811, we are told that "straw sentries were left behind, to deceive us" and that "scorched earth" policy was brought into play—"the track of their march might be discovered by smoking towns and villages."

On our retreat to the lines of Torres Vedras, "Distressing were the scenes. Thousands and tens of thousands of the Portuguese crowded the narrow roads to Lisbon, frequently mixing with and impeding the retreating army." At Vittoria, the roads were again blocked, but this time it was with "numerous carriages belonging to ladies and gentlemen" who had driven over, to have what is now called a grandstand view, of the English being beaten!

At the siege of Badajoz, there is a situation which calls for Nym's and Bardolph's comments. "While our company was in the trenches waiting for the engineer to stake out some more work, a party sat down to play cards in the trench. My duty was to warn the men of coming shot or shell. A burst of smoke: I bawled out 'Take care'; whew, whew, *whew*. The shell strikes the ground, rebounds, rolls

up the outside of the parapet and falls over the shoulder of a man whose name was Arundel, into the trench between his legs. A scramble ensued. A soldier seized the shell and threw it out of the trench."

Here, Cooper was made a serjeant. The fact is laconically chronicled. "Death had made room enough." He had then been in the Army for six years. He had signed on for seven. But his regiment did not return to England till June, 1814. Cooper was then the victim of a series of small mischances which added up to one big disappointment. "The period of my service being within three weeks of its termination, I looked for my liberation every day. According to my wishes the order to discharge all the seven years' men arrived, and the documents were written out forthwith." They anchored next to the *Chesapeake* which had been captured some time before by the *Shannon*. He saw his brother, with his discharge in his pocket, going ashore from a neighbouring ship. His own discharge had been made out by the clerks and "nothing was wanted to set us free but the Colonel's signature. Unfortunately, the Colonel was ashore." And the next thing that happened was that an order came "for our regiment to embark immediately on a secret expedition".

He did not return from that until May, 1815. "At daylight on Whitsunday morning, we discovered a French ship. We bore down alongside and hailed, 'What news have you?' 'Buonaparte has escaped from Elba and got to Paris, where he has 20,000 men in arms.'" Cooper forgets to be the prim serjeant. He says simply, "My stars, what a sensation!" Others take immemorial pleasure in telling him, "You seven years' men will never get off now."

On entering the English Channel they ran into a gale, but anchored at Spithead on 31st May. "No sooner had the telegraph indicated our arrival to the War Office than an order was sent by the same medium that we should

sail immediately to Ostend and join Wellington at Brussels."

However—"in the afternoon, all the seven years' men were discharged; we got our papers and were free." He thus arrived home a fortnight before the Battle of Waterloo—tantalizingly enough for us, but no doubt pleasurably for him. But he does not suffer himself to leave the Army without one last grouse, for "after all our services, we were not favoured" (notice the word!) "with boats to take us ashore: therefore we hired them".

And then what happened? "In 1818 I applied personally to Marshal Sir John Beresford respecting my obtaining a pension. The answer was, 'The rules are now so stringent that no limited service man can claim a pension unless he has been wounded'." Cooper had had it, for though he had been in hospital on and off during his campaigning, he had not been wounded. The nearest he came to it was at La Rhune. "Skirmishers below kept firing at us through a hedge. This was not pleasant as we had no orders to return the compliment. While this ugly fun was going on a comrade serjeant and I lay down close together, as the weather was cold, and began talking, when suddenly my friend cried out, 'O, I've caught it!' A ball had gone through his thigh. Another pennyweight of powder and it would have entered my premises."

So Cooper had no wound, and got no pension. He applied again in 1833, and then, in 1865, "I tried a third time and obtained one shilling a day." That was fifty years after his discharge, and it is to be hoped that his fate in the meantime had not been that of the character in *Love and a Bottle*—"Five years a Soldier and fifteen a Beggar! An age of Damnation for a Momentary Offence!" Farquhar's play was written nearly a century before Cooper joined the Army; it makes no matter, the remark holds good.

By the same token, two remarks made by contemporaries of Serjeant Cooper, are not without application to-day; and a sad comment it is that they should be. The first is from Wellington, who said of the foe of his time, "His plan was always to gain a great victory, patch up a peace, such a peace as might leave an opening for a future war"; and the second is from de Rocca, who, writing in his *Memoirs* of the Peninsular war, which he reached from Germany, "where the constant submission of each and everyone to the orders of a single one, continually pressed down the springs of individual character," found it true then, as there are signs to-day that it may be again, that the rulers of Germany "turned all their views towards perfecting those military institutions which might secure their authority and serve their personal ambition; but in accustoming their subjects to a minutely punctual obedience, they had weakened the national character, which is the only invincible bulwark that nations can oppose to foreign invaders".

I make way for Captain Clewes's diary of another campaign of the same Army one hundred and thirty years after Cooper left it.

FROM AN ITALIAN DIARY

By HOWARD CLEWES

WE ROUNDED PUNTA LICOSA at about midnight and came into Salerno Bay. The stars were very bright but there was no moon and the sea was quite calm. A long way to the north the other convoy was being attacked from the air, and though you could see the red tracer spouting lazily across the sky and the gay flares hanging over the sea, you could hear no sound of the battle. We were not attacked then. On the shore to the east there was a fire ; it looked like a house or a building of some kind ; the red flames danced on the smooth water and as its intensity did not diminish during the whole night, we supposed it must have been some kind of signal ; for us it had no particular significance. In any case, we thought, it did not matter greatly : the Italians had capitulated and there would be no opposition. Indeed we were rather surprised to be landing in Salerno Bay at all. We were extremely happy. We did everything light-heartedly.

There was no sound. We drifted, waiting. The sea slapped pleasantly at the waterline. Somebody had left the wireless on below and we could hear music faintly. We seemed to wait a long time.

The ship's Number One, who had a fine red beard and an impressive flow of language, supervised the work of unloading the amphibians into the sea. They were picked up one by one and dropped over the side, spinning slowly on the end of the cable, like plump spiders. It was unbelievably efficient. The amphibian we used carried a radio with a wooden housing built over it so that in the water it looked rather like one's childhood conception of Noah's Ark. We hit the sea very hard and for a moment I thought we were going under ; the water sucked and gurgled at the belly of the craft. We could not see the

thin cable, only the vast impassive flank of the ship against the stars. A long way above us a voice called, "You all right?" and when we said yes, fine, he said, "Then cast off the obscene cable," and we released the hook and started up the engine and nudged into the side of the ship. The hook soared up away from us and we could hear the derrick distantly. We saw the next vehicle in a moment turning slowly against the sky above us and we edged down the side of the ship towards the bows where the others were, like chickens round a contented hen, and made fast to the scrambling nets there. Then we waited again.

We lay under the side of the ship drifting with her, having the feeling that the land was moving, not the ship. I remember being disturbed and a little petulant about this, for I had got used to the way things looked when we had first been dropped over the side, and now it all looked quite different. The fire on the shore had disappeared, the Pole Star was in a different place, the ships lying quietly on the water near us had all gone. The stock of the automatic rifle I was holding was still warm from the sun we had sailed under in the day. Then above somebody shouted and we left the side of the ship. The breeze was warm.

A little way ahead of us there was another amphibian whose wake shone in the black water and the driver followed it. It was going very fast and you could smell the exhaust. Then I saw the others, all round us. We looked for the flashing light we were to follow and could not see it; neither the light, nor the fire on the shore, nor anything but the sparkling wakes, and there was no way of telling whether we were going towards the shore or not. We lit cigarettes furtively and told Johnson the driver to get out of the wake of the amphibian we were following, there was a lot of water coming over the side. When you stood up and looked over the stern, over the clumsy radio housing, you could see others following.

Then we swerved to avoid the vehicle ahead of us, for it had come to a standstill and lay wallowing on the sea, and when we called, "What's the matter?" he said nothing was the matter, for Christ's sake don't come so close. They had all stopped. There were more on the water than you could count. Now and then they started up their engines and careered about, shouting to one another and bumping and jostling, nobody knowing why the others had stopped. Almost at once we lost such formation as we might have had and officers began calling out the names of their units, infantry and engineers and anti-tank and anti-aircraft, hopelessly intermingled, seeking their sub-units, and commanders and demanding where the hell was the naval launch whose flashing light we were supposed to be following. Then we began to move again. A bold yellow light shone for a moment a long way in front of us, to the east, and we thought maybe that was Yellow Beach and turned towards it.

We stopped again after a few minutes. There was a lot more shouting. We drifted for a long time. The sea became quite rough and it began to get light and Mount Capaccio was outlined dimly against the dawn. We were about two miles offshore when the firing began. We could see the red tracer flashing against the hills and the fulsome explosion of mortars drifted over the bristling sea. Smoke hung above the beach all the way round the bay to the north and through the morning mist the white faces of Agropoli peered down to the bay from the hill to the south. A machine-gun tapped daintily at the mountains over which the sun rose like the head of God to see what it was we wanted. In the foothills of Capaccio we could see clearly the flashes of the 88 millimetres firing at us. They were all round us now, in a semicircle and it must have been very agreeable for them, for we were a dream of a target, all heading in line astern for Yellow Beach, a long line of

amphibians on the water ; they did not even have to alter their range.

We turned away to starboard—one is never sure whether to use nautical terminology or not with amphibians—but that made us only the more conspicuous, for, with our radio housing and our doubtful solitude, we must have looked like some kind of Command vessel, and the shells began to fall very close. Some of the amphibians were hit.

After the initial assault nobody landed on Yellow beach. The enemy waited for the first troops to land and then opened fire while they tried to get through the minefields there. There were one or two naval vessels firing over our heads at the eighty-eights in the hills, but it took a long time. A shell struck the water a few yards away from us and the blast knocked me off the seat and a splinter went through the radio housing. My ears sang.

Then a sloop went past us and on almost into the surf and, turning sharply to the north, sailed calmly round the bay laying a smoke screen. We could see it engaging the tanks on the shore. We went into the screen and shut off the engines and ate breakfast, a K-ration each.

We landed on Red beach. The sea was choppy on the way in and we shipped a lot of water, going fast for the shore with shells landing all round us. There was some wreckage in the surf and a broken landing craft drifted northwards with the tide. I felt the wheels take hold of the sand and we rose out of the water and trundled up the beach towards the gap in the dunes where the engineers were laying netting to make a road. There were some dead on the sand and the eighty-eights were concentrating their fire on the narrow gap in the dunes where the road was under construction. Somebody shouted to us to get the amphibian to hell away from there, it was drawing fire. We agreed. A couple more shells landed among the debris in the surf and one hit the sand ahead of us sending up a

big fountain. We heard the plane diving. There was a boy lying on the beach with the stump of his leg pointing up into the air heavily bandaged and when he heard the plane coming down at him he screamed and tried to crawl on his hands and knees into the dunes but the plane got him in the back of the head and he kicked for a moment before he died. The fifty millimetres and the little flakship in the bay opened fire and the noise was blinding. The Messerschmidt glittered prettily in the morning sunshine going right along the beach, firing all the way.

We reached the tobacco factory a little before nightfall. It consisted of a series of warehouses or drying sheds from whose ceilings the leaves hung. The smell was pleasant. In the grounds there were a number of cottages used by the employees. We entered one and told the tired Italian woman we found there that we were going to stay and would pay all right. She was very bewildered and frightened. She had had eighteen children and a diploma to that effect, signed by Mussolini, and distinctly phallic in design; it hung in the dining-room. Not that a diploma was in any way necessary: there they were. Indeed there were so many children and soon so many war correspondents in the little house that the unfortunate woman had some difficulty in telling one from the other. In this she was not alone.

That was at Paestum.

Later, we moved to Pontecagnano, to a fruit warehouse full of walnuts in sacks, after the fall of Battipaglia.

The ground shook a little under the weight of the tanks passing through the crowds in the gaunt streets standing on the fallen masonry and rubble among the ruins. The dust they raised glittered in the sunshine and soon everybody was covered with a film of white dust. People threw bottles of wine to the crews in the turrets and sometimes threw

badly so that the bottles hit and burst against the sides and the wines ran streaming down the turrets of the tanks. There was a lot of clapping and cheering and weeping and the girls threw flowers on the road under the tracks. The driver of the truck we were in pulled up and got out and squared up to the men who were kissing his face and hands and said if another bastard kissed him he would break his bloody nose. There was still a lot of sniping in the back streets and now and then we could hear the hesitant chatter of machine guns out along the coast road. The old man lay against the wall of the station in the shadow. The blood had dried on the paving stones round his head and there were plenty of flies. He was still wearing his hat, which was grey. Under his arm there was an umbrella whose handle was carved in the shape of the head of a foxcub with yellow stones for eyes that shone through the leaves of the branch somebody had thrown over him. Nobody disturbed him. There were many people passing, up and down the Corso Umberto. The ground trembled. It was very bright and cheerful. People were firing rifles into the air and throwing German bombs they had found. Everybody was pleased. The whole city was pleased. We went right through the city towards the Volturno.

The light in the tent was brown. The rain pattered daintily on the canvas, sometimes loudly, when the wind blew. Outside we could see the wet earth going away up the valley and through the open flap at the other end of the tent, the ambulance coming up the hillside through the mud. We could hear the battle up the valley, there was a good deal of machine-gun fire, mostly German thirty-fours, and the dull explosion of our own mortars and the barrage going over our heads whispering. In the tent there was a smell of ether and blood and wet clothes and the two doctors, both of whom wore glasses, had their

sleeves rolled up. Everything was covered with a film of moisture. We spoke to the orderly whose bald head shone in the brown light and he said they were mostly Germans to-day. The one in the corner spoke French, he said. The man opened his eyes when we leaned over the stretcher. He was very young and had fair hair and a brown stubble on his chin. He was wounded in both thighs and had had two plasma units, the orderly said. His face was wet with the rain and there were raindrops on the blanket that covered him.

"Comment vous sentez-vous?"

He opened his eyes and looked from one to the other of us.

"Mieus."

"Où avez-vous fait la guerre?"

He raised his shoulders a little. "Stalingrad."

"Et en Italie."

"Oui. J'y suis."

"Depuis combien de temps êtes-vous mobilisé?"

"Depuis six ans." Rain dripped through the canvas on to the blanket. "Je suis fatigué."

After a time we went back up the valley towards the fight there.

In the desolate city the representatives of the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrat Party and the Action Party and the Socialist Party and the Communist Party and those in favour of Labour Democracy met in committee. They had no power and nothing to do except talk, but they talked very well indeed. Count Sforza was in the city also, and the wise Benedetto Croce, and Adolfo Omodeo, who was the rector of the university, and the Marshal. Finally, the King was there.

On this day the sun shone brightly over the ruins. In the clear light they were naked and abrupt and unlovely.

The streets were crowded with people who had nothing to do and some of them went to the university where there was a celebration about how to-day was the anniversary of the armistice with Austria. The proceedings were organized by the Rector, and though pretty well everybody knew about the celebration taking place except the military authorities, called the Amateur Military Gentlemen On Tour, who were the people who ought to have known about it most, very few knew what the celebration was for and there was not much popular feeling. At about three o'clock in the afternoon a shop for gentlemen in the Via Roma which was doing very well selling silk pyjamas to the soldiery, hung out a flag from the window of the first floor and then the man who had done it sat and stared at the people in the street below for a long time from the window. He had a bottle of wine and occasionally took a pull at it.

The Marshal, who said the King ought not to abdicate, conferred with the committee, who said the King would damn well have to abdicate, especially Eugenio Reale, the representative of the Communist party, and then addressed the press saying he had an open mind about everything except in the matter of the question asked by the correspondents of the Isolationists newspapers to which he replied that he was a soldier and not a politician and would shoulder his musket with the best of them or for that matter with the people generally.

At the celebration in the university Count Sforza in his speech remarked on the significance of the occasion and thanked the Rector for his efforts on behalf of democracy and one thing and another and said that all those people tainted with fascism ought to be punished or at least not allowed to have it all their own way, as in the past. This was taken to be an allusion to His Majesty and there was some applause which was multiplied several times by the

Count's friends who were also in the audience by chance and by the electrical public address system installed for the occasion by A branch of the Allied Headquarters.

At this time it was illegal for anyone to make political speeches. (The Count held that what he had said was not political but a fact.) It seemed that the Branch ought to have informed the Amateur Military Gentlemen On Tour of the Count's intention to speak politically or indeed at all or the Rector ought to have done so or maybe the Count himself or anyway somebody; the Branch ought to have known better. Had the Amateur Military Gentlemen been told they could have prohibited the whole thing in accordance with normal practice and the rules they had drawn up and they were frightfully browned off, they said. However, the Rector was firmly rebuked.

Meanwhile the King, who had been lunching with some old friends of his who were Allied generals, was touring the city in order to test popular reaction to his presence, if any, and see for himself whether the people desired his abdication or not. Whether by accident or with considerable malice or maybe just for the hell of it, the Transport Officer of the organization which loaned the King the car he was to tour the city in selected the vehicle for its size rather than with regard to His Majesty's personal stature. The car was tremendous and the King was not. The windows were so high and the seat so low that not only could the King not see out but the people couldn't see in. It was then too late to send the car back and ask for another so a couple of velvet cushions were provided for the royal seat. During the tour he kept slipping off, however, and just as he was about to be acclaimed or maybe abused by such of his subjects as noticed him, and they were as few as they were incredulous, he would suddenly disappear from sight, which was unusually confusing. It was during one such unhappy contretemps, which took place outside

the shop in the Via Roma that was doing very well selling silk pyjamas to the soldiery, that the man, an Englishman, who had hung out the flag to celebrate the armistice with Austria, took a long pull at the bottle of wine he was drinking and remarked, "Lewis, where art thou?"

When the King reached the university, coincidentally with the close of the celebrations there, a number of people saw him and greeted him with loud cries either of "Viva il rey!" which means long live the king, or "Via il rey!" which means, very simply, away with the king. But when these shibboleths are shouted in unison by a crowd of excited citizens there is great difficulty in telling them apart. The ensuing discussion did not last long; Eugenio Reale, the representative of the Communist Party, said they said, "Via il rey!" and had many supporters, and the King said they said, "Viva il rey!" but only the King said so.

On the Garigliano that afternoon George Goodacre who was a gamekeeper by profession and what the French call a "simple soldat" was out by himself on a patrol because he could use ground so well, and was hit by a mortar bomb. He was found in the grey mud on the river bank. I knew him before the war. He was a good fellow.

POEMS FROM HEINE'S "DIE NORDSEE"

Translated by VERNON WATKINS

FIRST CYCLE

I

Coronation

SONGS, MY STALWART songs,
 Up, up, and arm yourselves !
 Let the trumpets sound,
 And proclaim for me in chivalry
 This young girl
 Who is now about to rule
 My entire heart, as queen.

Hail to you, you young queen !

From the sun up there
 I tear, refulgent, the red gold,
 And weave out of it a crown
 For your consecrated head.
 From the shot, blue-silken covering of heaven
 In which the night-diamonds glitter
 I cut a precious piece
 And hang it as coronation-robe for you
 Around your regal shoulders.
 I give you a court-attendance
 Of stiffly attired sonnets,
 Proud terzinas and elegant stanzas.
 As runner my wit will serve you,
 As court-fool my fantasy,
 As herald, laughter's armed tear in irony,
 My humour will serve you.
 But I myself, queen,

I kneel before you,
And in homage, on the red velvet cushion,
I present to you
The little morsel of understanding
Left me, still, out of pity,
By your predecessor in the kingdom.

2

Evening Dusk

ON THE PALE strand of the sea
I sat, troubled with thoughts and lonely.
The sun sank deeper, and threw
Red-glowing bands on the water,
And the white, wide waves,
Pressed by the incoming tide,
Foamed and rushed forward, nearer and nearer—
A weird rush of sounds, a whispering and piping,
A laughing and murmuring, sighing and whistling,
And between them in secret a lullaby-singing—
To me it re-echoed like long-lost sagas,
Like earliest, beautiful stories
That I, once, as a boy,
Would hear from the neighbours' children,
When we, in the Summer evening,
Squatted on the stone steps to the door,
Listening to the quiet tales
With small, attentive hearts
And shrewdly questioning eyes ;
While the tall, grown girls
Beside fragrant flower-pots
Sat over there at the window,
Rose-faces,
Smiling and caught by the moon.

3

Sunset

THE GLOWING RED sun drops
Down into the wide, uproarious,
Silver-grey sea of the world ;
Creatures of air, rose-tinged by the breath,
Surge towards him ; and over against them,
Out of the twilight's autumnal cloud-veils,
A mournful, death-pale countenance,
Breaks into sight the moon,
And behind her, flickering scintillations,
Out in the mist, sparkle the stars.

Once in the heavens glittered,
Conjugally joined,
Luna, the goddess, and Sol, the god,
And around them swarmed the stars,
The little, innocent children.

But evil tongues began whispering of discord,
And then divided in enmity
The lofty, radiant wedded pair.

Now in the day, in lonely splendour,
There in the height the sun-god goes,
For his great glory
Prayed to and honoured much in song
By proud men hardened by fortune's favour,
But at night
Through the heavens wanders Luna,
The wretched mother

With her destitute star-children,
And she gleams in unuttered sorrow,
And girls in love and tender poets
Pledge to her tears and songs.

Weak Luna ! With a woman's nature
Still she loves the magnificent groom.
Towards evening, trembling and pale,
She peeps from behind light cloud,
And gazes after the departing one, bitterly,
As if she would call him poignantly : " Come !
Come ! The children long for you—"
But the defiant sun-god,
At the sight of the spouse he flushed
In redoubled crimson
With anger and pain,
And inexorably he hastened down
Into his sea-cold widower's bed.

Evil, whispering tongues
Brought, then, pain and dissolution
Even to eternal gods.
And the wretched gods, high in the heavens,
Go, full of torment,
Comfortless, never-ending journeys,
And cannot die,
And with them they trail
Their radiant misery.

But I, the man,
The lowly-planted, the death-endowed,
I complain no longer.

5

Poseidon

THE SUNBEAMS PLAYED
Over the sea rolling out into distance ;
Far-off at anchor sparkled the ship
Which was to bear me home ;
But still there was no good wind for sailing,
And still I sat peacefully on a white dune
By the lonely beach,
And I read the song of Odysseus,
The old, the forever youthful song,
Out of whose leaves inspired with sea-sound
Rose to me joyfully
The breath of the gods,
And the radiant Springtime of men
And the blossoming sky of Hellas.

My noble heart accompanied faithfully
The son of Laertes, in wanderings and trouble,
Sat down with him, disturbed in soul,
At the welcoming hearth
Where queens spin purple,
And helped him to lie and escape by luck
From caves of giants and arms of nymphs,
Followed him on to Cimmerian darkness,
And in storm and shipwreck,
And suffered with him untellable misery.

Sighing I spoke : " You wicked Poseidon,
Your anger is terrible,
And I myself am in fear
For my own homecoming."

I had hardly said the words
When the sea foamed up,
And out of the white waves rose
The reed-crowned head of the sea-god,
And scornfully he called :

“ Never fear, little poet !
I will not at all imperil
Your poor little ship,
And I will not alarm your precious life
With all-too hazardous rolling.
For you, little poet, have never angered me,
No single turret have you disfigured
At Priam’s holy banquet-hall,
Not one little hair have you singed
On the eye of my son Polyphemus,
And you, never with counsel has guarded
The goddess of prudence, Pallas Athene.”

So called out Poseidon
And dived back into the sea ;
And over his clumsy seaman’s-wit
Laughed under the water
Amphitrite, the ponderous fish-wife,
And the stupid daughters of Nereus.

IO

Sea-Apparition

I, HOWEVER, LAY at the rim of the ship,
And gazed, with dreaming eye,
Down into the mirror-clear water,
And gazed deeper and deeper—
Till deep, far down in the depth of the sea,
At first like dawning mist,

Yet gradually more distinctly coloured,
Churches' domes and towers revealed themselves,
And at last, clear as sunlight, a whole town,
Antique, in the style of the Netherlands,
And bustling with men.
Reflective men, black-coated,
With white ruffs and chains of honour
And long swords and long faces,
Go striding over the teeming market place
To the town-hall raised high above steps,
Where stony images of kings
Keep watch with sceptre and sword.
Not far away, before long house-rows
Where mirror-dull windows are.
And lime-trees cut in the form of pyramids,
Young girls go walking in rustling silk,
Slender figures, their sweet flower-faces
Chastely enclosed in little black caps
And escaping, flowing gold hair.
Bright-coloured lads in Spanish costume
Go proudly past and bow.
Aged women
In brown, outmoded garments,
Hymn-book and rosary in their hands,
Hurry, with quick little steps,
Towards the great cathedral,
Spurred by the chiming of bells
And the surging sound of the organ.

Me, too, seizes the distant clangour's
Mysterious dolour.
Endless longing, deep-searching sorrow
Steals into my heart,
My scarcely healed heart ;—
To me it seems that its wounds were being

Kissed open by dear lips
And started again to bleed—
Hot, red drops,
That long and slowly fall
On an old house, down there
In the deep-sunk sea-town,
On an old high-gabled house
That is gloomily empty of people,
Only that there at the lower window
A girl sits,
With her head at rest on her arm,
Like a poor, forgotten child—
And I know you, poor, forgotten child !

So deep, ocean-deep, then,
You hid yourself from me
Out of childish fancy,
And could not come up any more,
And sat strange among strange people,
Centuries long,
While I, my soul full of sorrow,
Over the whole Earth sought you,
And constantly sought you,
You constantly-loved one,
You long, long-lost one,
You finally-found one—
I, I have found you and see again
Your dear, sweet face,
The wise, faithful eyes,
The tender smile,—
And never, never again will I leave you,
And I come down to you,
And with outstretched arms
I dive down, down to your heart—

But at the right moment quickly
 Gripped me by the foot the captain,
 And pulled me back from the ship's rail,
 And cried, bitterly laughing :
 " Doctor, are you stark crazy ? "

II

Purification

STAY IN YOUR depth of sea,
 Delirious dream,
 You that once so many a night
 Tortured my heart with deceiving pleasure
 And now in the shape of a sea-ghost
 Still in the clearness of day would threaten me—
 Stay down there, to eternity,
 And I throw down after you
 All my torments and sins,
 And the skull-cap-and-bells of folly
 That around my head so long has tinkled,
 And the cold, resplendent snake-skin
 Of dissimulation
 That has wound itself so long round my soul,
 My sick soul,
 My God-disowning, angel-disowning,
 Unhappy soul—
 Hoy ho ! Hoy ho ! Here comes the wind.
 Up with the sails ! They flutter and swell.
 Over the silent, corruptible surface
 Speeds the ship,
 And the soul rejoices, freed.

HAVEN

By DOROTHY M. RICHARDSON

PURLING AWAKES, AS he had fully expected to do, within the deepest depths of peace. His eyes take in symmetrical oblongs of window-curtain, densely patterned, yet transparent enough to admit, last night, the sky's faint glimmer and, this morning, golden light.

Urged out of bed by a sudden busy cheeping and scrabbling of sparrows, he feels beneath his feet the carpet's soft, clean surface and, in his mind, the dawn of a resolve : in this sequestered house, discovered by following his nose, and immediately announcing itself as his destination, he will remain aloof from his surroundings, keep the compass of his being firmly set, and thus achieve the concentration needed for the work in hand.

Ankle-deep in his splash-bath, he finds himself whistling with the liveliness of a guest hurrying to be breakfasting, amongst friends, in the glow of an overnight unity. Quelling the inappropriate mood born of the room's guest-chamberly air, he recalls his expanded being to its centre.

"Shaving-water. Breakfast in fifteen minutes."

The woman's voice had reached him more directly through the closed door than when, face to face, he had asked his few questions and noted the tonelessness of her replies. Yet even when slightly raised it revives his impression of her as a being serene and negative. The inevitable meeting and greeting will not dim, before he can use it, his morning clarity.

Clinkings, along the passage, of a carried trayful of crockery. Silence. The tinkle of a Swiss cowbell, muted, sweet. Her retreating footsteps. Breakfast is waiting. After breakfast he can hide, in here, while she clears, postpone meeting and conversation until later. The morning is safe.

Warm room. Fire cheerily burning. Savoury break-

fast pleasantly set out. Stillness so perfect that he might be alone in the house.

His second cup of tea suggests that she may presently appear to inquire if he would like more hot water. But she does not appear. He finishes his breakfast blissfully alone with the world in clear focus all about him, all he knows, all he has experienced, newly alive and available in virtue of this so blessedly unthreatened depth of concentration.

With the door wide open, he swings the little bell, sets it down upon the table, and retreats to his bedroom, shutting himself in with a soundfulness sufficient to reach the back premises. Hears Miss Tillard come down the passage and presently retire with her clinking trayful.

The odour of breakfast has gone, and the enervating, cosy glow surrounding him as he fed is replaced by a warm freshness. She has opened one of the top-lights and made up the fire. Upon the cleared table stands the little bell. Her deputy. Unless summoned she will not appear.

Mind and body abruptly failing, he relaxes in his chair to emit, in comfort, a long sigh of relief. Like a diver emerging from deep water with open eyes, he becomes aware of the forgotten room and of its stillness, broken now by his movements as he gathers up his scattered sheets, seeing, ahead, to-morrow and its morning; an unnumbered series of to-morrows as good as to-day.

Will it be possible? Is Miss Tillard, at last, the ideal landlady? Will she, at the end of a fortnight, still be remote? A fortnight; usually the outside limit. In all his wanderings, sooner or later, gradually or suddenly, the current landlady's personality has flowed in upon him, demanding attention like a presented bill. Failure to honour the bill has bred an ever-threatening hostility. Destructive.

"Four conversaziones per day," he groans in his weak-

ness. Even with Miss Tillard, featureless and withholding as she seems to be, it will presently come to that. Prison. Prison is the only complete refuge. And perhaps even a gaoler, in the end, makes his demands? She is gentle. Up to a point, cultured. It may be possible to make rigorous terms. State, exactly, the demands of one's work. But not until after lunch. If now she were to enter the room, I should smile myself, a happy convalescent, into her hands. Returning my inane smile, she would imagine that in her new lodger she had found a friend, or a child.

Glancing at the clock, he sees that she may indeed arrive at any moment now with the food he so eagerly desires. Hurriedly he sweeps his belongings on to a side table and decamps, again opening and shutting doors with deliberate soundfulness.

In the shelter of his bedroom he looks out upon a sunlit expanse. Unemotionally; seeing it merely as the afternoon's exercise ground, and again sighs his happiness. For this absence of interest in an unknown countryside is sure evidence of the favourable state. An afternoon's restorative tramping, a little work after a leisurely tea. No reading. Above all, no reading. After supper a meditative pipe or so, and then early to bed with forces canalized for to-morrow.

When presently the little bell sounds its summons, he seems to have heard it from that blessed sanctuary a hundred times before, and turns serenely, fully armed, towards lunch and landlady. Lunch indeed is there, but Miss Tillard already has vanished.

After an excellent meal whose cold second course had been set upon the table with the rest, he feels almost eager to see and somehow to express gratitude. Placing a fireside chair so that he will be sitting sideways to the rest of the room, he rings the bell and sits down with his pipe, fully prepared for the inevitable interview. A gentle tap, and here she is.

Her serene "Good afternoon" is less of a greeting than a prelude to the further words which almost drown his response. "I want a list of the things you don't like. Onions, for example," and she reels off, while busily clearing the table, a brief catalogue. Assuring her of a catholic taste, he is about to become complimentary when she begins again. "Then I'll continue to prelude your breakfast with a cereal and fruit, and sometimes there shall be fruit or a savoury for lunch instead of a sweet. Anyhow, variety. At the end of a week I'll consult you once more." Leaving him no time to respond, she hurries on: "I'll give you tea at half-past four, say toast and honey and a scrap of home-made cake? And supper at nine?"

"That will suit me perfectly." She is gathering up the tablecloth. In a moment she will be gone. Now is the time. But again her voice breaks in.

"I didn't suggest late dinner, which, of course, if you prefer—"

Immediately voicing his disclaimer, he turns fully round, to face her while expressing the amplitude of his general appreciation, only to find, already between them, the opened door.

"Principal meal at midday seems to fit country life." For the first time, her level voice, slightly raised behind the sheltering door, has a ring of something like vitality. "And a latish supper shortens the evening." Upon her last word, the door is gently closed.

For days he sees her no more. His dream is realized. Here, at last, is indeed the perfect landlady. Better, even, than the trained deaf-mute for whom, again and again, he has despairingly yearned. The whole of his being is turned, untapped, upon his enterprise. Each morning finds him ardently at work. Each afternoon he flings himself into the open. Breathing the moistly soft air of a mild January, he

walks swiftly, heedless of his surroundings, welcoming the early fall of darkness that is the herald of to-morrow. Daily, at some moment on his tour, his eyes are called, his senses challenged: by the last sun-ray, madder-rose upon a crumbling gatepost, a leaf of hornbeam, burning out its gold upon a stripped hedge. From such things he turns swiftly away, feeling the joy they evoke flow back into his being; restorative.

The third week brings cold. On its last morning a dense grey sky is shedding hesitant flakes upon a world grown white in a single night. The even, lurid light banishes the sense of time. The further spaces of the landscape have vanished behind a thick grey curtain. Perfection of enclosure. The writer's paradise. As he rises from the breakfast table, Purling finds himself drawn to the window. Flouting an inward protest against any departure from the set pattern of his daily movements, he goes down the room to pay, within the spectral light of the window-space, a moment's tribute to his benefactors. Exhilarated by the chill given off by the panes and woodwork, he stands bewitched, watching the eddying flakes hover, as if of set purpose to beguile; each young flake seeming aware of the magic effectiveness of its irregular movement, the ecstatic quality of the suspense created by its apparent hesitancy between coming to rest upon earth and wavering upward to hover once more amidst a ceaseless company. In a moment desire rises within him, for another witness; for someone to share and to reflect his exultation.

Here he stands, a truant, a boy caught by a spectacle, unable to escape. In vain he tells himself to retreat as usual to his room across the passage. The inner tumult, refusing to subside, turns him on his heel. He tinkles the little bell and goes back to his post at the window.

Stillness. Isolation with the muffled landscape and the silent house. Away in her kitchen, before whose window

the snow will be falling unnoticed, she listens, inanimate, for the closing of his bedroom door. Shall he ring again? Composedly she will advance down the passage to stand in the doorway, destroying, while she awaits a statement of his needs, the last remnant of his delight.

Escaping into memory, he finds mother Shabley with him in the room, hurling into space as she lumbers about collecting his breakfast things, the outcries that will have rung through the house since dawn. Again he savours the relief he had known whenever exaggerated weather had supplied a topic for the inevitable morning interview. Once more he hears its daily accompaniment: the clatter announcing from upstairs the armed occupation of his bedroom. No refuge.

Here, all day long, is refuge; peace. Calling to him from the depths of this warm room, from the bracing chill of his empty bedroom across the passage. Cursing his moment's folly, he strides across to its shelter, closing its door with the usual signalling soundfulness, and strolls over to its window. The snowstorm is now in full swing. Large, mature flakes drive down, indifferently, thick and fast upon a busy errand that is no concern of his.

Restored to his fireside, he awaits, smoking a savourless pipe, the return of serenity. The room seems small, stuffy. Kept there by the absence of the vital stream usually flowing in through the top-light, the odour of breakfast still hangs about. To banish preoccupation he paces to and fro, keeping his eyes downcast lest they betray him into investigating the still unfamiliar furniture. Turning for the third time from the welcome chill of the window-space, he knows himself on the way back to his centre. Within his emptied consciousness is the stirring of desire to be at work. When he reaches the fireside he will collect and, in the character of servitor, lay out his materials. Then one more journey to the window and back. By that time his

detachment will be complete. He is still a stranger, still nowhere and unknown. Mercifully, Miss Tillard is unaware of his escapade.

"Damnation ! I'm still all over the place." There it is, clear in his mind, placed there by a sudden treachery of the eyes : a complete picture of the room, its proportions, every detail of its furniture, a suite, one of identical millions.

Shocked by the bitter animosity within him, he makes for the fire, resolutely knocks out his half-smoked pipe, pits against imagination's tumult the leisurely sounds of preparation for work and presently is seated, more or less serene, but unable any longer to draw inspiration from the very air of the unknown room. Wearily he sees ahead a daily battle for concentration amidst the contemptuous silence of the affronted furniture.

Pen in hand, he re-reads yesterday's pages and presently is drawing comfort from the swiftness of his discovery of what is wrong with a passage marked for revision. So it is to be one of those days, intermittent, usually produced by fatigue, when the reservoir is closed and one comes, as a stranger, to what it has so far produced. But this moment's reflection has left him with eyes half-raised and set upon the near sideboard, noting its high polish, and in his mind a teasing statement stands like a placard : at intervals, perhaps every week, this room will be " turned out ".

Returned to the faulty passage, he finds he has lost the phrase that a moment ago had leaped to the rescue. Fiercely he rounds upon the central enemy, his breakfast-time emotion, unappeased and still manœuvring. Mere languor, the normal occasional drop below form, allowing the critical to usurp the place of the creative faculty, he might profitably have used. But this emotional derailment is pure loss.

A fresh snowfall, shortening his walk, brings him home before tea-time. The house seems alien. Its facade stares

at him as if inquiring his business. For the first time he notices its weather-stains, the marks of its private experience. The door, sun-blistered, challenges his approach, seeming to warn him, as his hand reaches for the latch, that he will enter at his peril. Shall he turn back, brave the snow-fall until on-coming darkness brings the promise of to-morrow?

The door opens upon immediate fulfilment of apprehension. Loud voices, laughter, echoing along the passage. Dominating the tumult, the voice of Miss Tillard, almost unrecognizable. Careless and gay, transforming the quiet interior.

While he stands listening, transfixed, the door, left open behind him for the shaking out of his snow-sprent coat, shuts with a resounding bang. Silence, abrupt and absolute. The kitchen door opens and Miss Tillard, flushed and dishevelled, comes hurriedly down the passage.

"What an afternoon! I'll make up your fire, and perhaps you'd like an early tea."

His response, from the passage as she slides into his room, a little eager and a pitch or two above his usual tone, sounds to him like a contribution to the recent din. Here he is, caught, entangled in society, playing a part.

When she returns with his tea, they discuss the weather, self-consciously expanding the topic, each waiting for the other to make an end.

Once more alone, Purling feels for a moment pleasantly social, relieved of the burden of his morning. But at a price that grows as he regards it, more and more appalling. His new world has fallen in ruins. For the moment, so long as she is engaged with her friends, the way lies open that leads to the point of departure for the space wherein for illimitable days he has dwelt with his vision. But only for the moment. Once her friends gone, and the two of them

again alone in the house, the truth will settle down, perpetually vocal.

Continuously, henceforth, he will be aware of her: concentrated upon him and his needs, creeping about, muting, on his behalf, the sound of all her doings.

The alternative? To ask her, beg her, to go about her work and her recreation as if he were not there. She would understand. Certainly she is capable of that kind of understanding. Even so, with every sound in the house he would be aware of her, aware, worse still, of her awareness conscious of himself as its object; unable to achieve complete immersion.

Choice, between two kinds of invasion. Wreckage either way.

The surest security is in the lion's mouth? To be in the midst of an oblivious crowd. Part of it, unnoticed. He recalls writers who have worked just anywhere. Dostoevsky, on a corner of the kitchen table, with the family clamorous all about him. Lawrence, tucked into any available space, and at once serenely oblivious. Peace at the heart of a storm. Storm comparable to that raging all the while at Mother Shabey's. Where, after all, he had done some of his best work. The life of the household, wrapped nourishingly about him, had yet left him untouched. *Had never come between him and himself.*

Excuse can easily be improvised. Will Mother Shabley's rooms be available? Where, amongst his still not unpacked belongings, are notepaper and envelopes?

WE'VE ALL GOT TO LEARN

By MONICA STIRLING

WHEN THE 'BUS turned sharply round the corner all but one of the passengers jogged forward as unsurprisingly as farmers mounted on friendly old horses with whose obstinacies they have long been familiar. The remaining passenger, a young girl in A.T.S. uniform, showed herself a stranger to the district by banging her head against the window. Then she began, very quietly, to cry.

Several minutes passed before her behaviour attracted any attention. The 'bus was passing a Georgian house set on a slope at the bottom of which was a swan wreathed lake, and this spectacle moved the passengers to abandon such subjects as Mr. Giles' landgirls and Mrs. Giles' kidneys for the family affairs of the present owners of the house: of how the younger son had been killed at sea and the elder wounded in Africa, of what a sad business the war was and what a shame it would be if the Llarnys couldn't keep the old place in the family. (Planners may come and planners may go, but it seems likely that conservatism will for some time remain a moral if not a political influence in many rural parts of England.)

But as the talk grew desultory an elderly woman seated opposite the child in uniform leaned forward and said amiably, "There, there, my duck. Don't take on so. We've all got our troubles . . ."

"Do you think that helps?" She did not speak loudly, but the authority in her voice made everyone present stare. It in no way harmonized with the distraught expression on her pale face.

"Well—it's something to know we're all in the same boat, isn't it?"

"Is it?" A look that no one present recognized as ironic came into the girl's eyes. She glanced round and,

observing this general failure in awareness, added with deceptive mildness, "Is it? I should think it made it worse. Knowing everyone else was miserable, I mean. Unless one's a born dog in the manger."

"Well . . ." the older woman looked bewildered. She was of an exceptionally kind temperament, and used to associating with persons too habituated to her nature, and too deficient in intellectual power, to be perturbed by the fact that, being without command of any language she could express herself verbally only in clichés.

"Well, duck . . . if you look at it like that. . ."

The clergyman seated next to her came to the rescue.

"Are you . . . is there anything I can . . . we can do?"

The girl looked at him consideringly, then said, articulating over precisely as if for the benefit of a foreigner, "Nothing. Thank you very much."

"Not . . . not a bereavement, I trust?"

"Not a bereavement."

"I wonder . . . would you tell me your name, my dear . . . perhaps my wife . . ."

"If you like. Greta—after Garbo you know." She gave a sarcastic little smile. "Not very suitable, not really."

"Er . . . quite . . . er Greta what?"

"Smith. Quite suitable, that part, in fact . . ."

Unable to finish the sentence she jerked her head away. A moment later it could be seen from the muscles of her neck that she was again crying.

The 'bus jolted along, and no one made any further attempt to communicate with Greta. But her stillness was as difficult to ignore as the deliberate repose of a talented actress, and soon the other passengers began to give each other shifty looks. They were kindly people, but the girl's cool, almost argumentative, manner had antagonized them. Watching her they felt not compassion but guilt, which they mistook for exasperation; and one by one they made

the gestures that were their respective equivalents for a shrug, and began to talk with defensive approval (and in voices louder than was necessary to be heard) of those girls of their acquaintance who were Thoroughly Enjoying Every Moment of life in the services.

Presently the 'bus stopped at the bottom of a lane that led to a big Army camp. Signing to the conductress the girl got jerkily to her feet. She looked even thinner and more desolate standing than she had done seated. But by this time only the conductress, herself a young woman, felt sympathy for her. To show that she did she smiled at Greta and said, as the latter stood waiting on the step: "Cheer up old cock. It'll all be the same in a hundred years. What's the trouble?"

Greta looked at her suspiciously, then gave her a crooked smile and, saying "Homesick", stepped from the 'bus and, without wiping the tears from her face or once looking back, began to walk up the lane.

The 'bus had to wait some minutes for the school children who could be seen running and yelling, at the end of a gravelled track on the opposite side of the road, and as it waited conversation between the passengers became general, as it is apt to do between persons who have shared a dangerous experience, and one or two of them drew deep breaths.

The cause of this uneasiness was walking up the lane, snorting through her sobs at the recollection of the expression on the clergyman's face when he said "Not a bereavement, I trust?" and thinking of her first bereavement. This had occurred when she was eight and had not taken her by surprise. She had early become inured to unpleasantness.

Born in a dirty room in a dirty house in a London slum, Greta had not until she was eight had personal experience of good food or adequate rest. Or of privacy. Her brothers

and sisters, of whom there were a great many, were not all highly intelligent: Mrs. Smith had received instruction as to birth control at the local clinic, but when she attempted to put her knowledge into practice her husband gave her a black eye and said he'd have no looseness in his home, see. Unfortunately for Mr. Smith's children his austere moral outlook did not prevent him spending most of his money upon drink, the effect of which was not to make him more amiable. When Greta was eight her father knocked her mother down. It was not the first time he had done so, but it was the last because, having caught her head on the iron fender as she fell, Mrs. Smith died soon afterwards.

After this the authorities decided with regret that not even considerations as to the sanctity of the home justified Mr. Smith's being allowed to remain in charge of his family and, he having been consigned to a prison with which he was not unfamiliar, the children were allotted to Approved Homes.

But before Greta could be dispatched to her Home, she was adopted by a social worker who had met the Smiths while nursing in the district.

Polly Leggat was everything Mrs. Smith had not been: maternal, reliable, gay, and pretty. So pretty that during her first days in the clean little house that was to be her home, Greta did little but stare at the small pointed face, the soft curling dark hair, the luminous blue eyes of her adopted mother.

Although Polly Leggat was married, neither she nor the little girl saw much of Mr. Leggat. He was usually away On Business. Greta was glad of this. She could not but conclude, from her own experience, that a household without men was happier, as well as more orderly, than one with them. Also Polly had one thing in common with Mrs. Smith—a tendency to cry after her husband's visits, and to ascribe her tears to her being Out Of Sorts. Had

Greta been a more gently nurtured little girl she would have wondered why people ever married. As it was, she thought she knew. Just sex: another of nature's dirty tricks.

But though her new life did not enlarge her conception of matrimony, it did give her a new and entirely delightful idea as to the relations possible between mother and child and, with Polly's love as guide, Greta began to change from a sharp little animal into a considerate child.

Then, when she was fourteen and had almost forgotten that she had known any care but Polly's, Greta was given yet another cause for hating men. Always a careless driver, Mr. Leggat knocked a man down, killed him, and was arrested for manslaughter, and let it be known at his trial that he and Polly were not legally married. One detail of his private life leading to another, the Magistrate was told that six years ago the accused had adopted, or permitted The Woman Taylor (this was how they referred to Polly) to adopt a girl child. This piece of information incensed the magistrate, himself the affectionate father of several young daughters, more than anything else in the case and, after further investigation, he announced with genuine piety that he was glad to say that, the parties concerned having given false information about themselves, the adoption had not been in order and there was in consequence nothing to prevent the unfortunate little girl being at once rescued from this travesty of a home. Some of those present thought the magistrate was being conscientious, which he was; others thought him interfering, which he also was. The latter group could not alter the old man's decision, but did suggest that the woman Taylor having shown herself an exemplary mother, and the child Smith being broken-hearted at the projected separation, the pair might be allowed a final meeting before the child was taken to the Approved Home chosen for her.

Greta's infancy had taught her something of the way poverty and desire can cause human beings to behave like the less attractive animals, but nothing of how fear can give virtuous and dignified adults the air of terrified children ; and from her last meeting with Polly she never entirely recovered. They clung together, unable to find any banal phrases with which to conceal the apprehension each felt on the other's behalf ; and three months after they had parted with many a kiss distasted with the salt of broken tears, Polly had committed suicide and Greta, who was not told this lest it should unsettle her, was become a child whose quietness made her teachers uneasy, since not the most unimaginative of them could connect it with docility.

Within six months Greta was practising very few of the virtues taught her by the gentle Polly ; simplicity, affectionate ways, and the wish to behave well were gone ; only a precocious understanding of the meaning of the word happiness remained, helping her as did nothing else to add up the score of grudges she was unconsciously keeping against a mysterious They who, in her estimation, controlled the universe. The slum baby whose life had been ruined by a drunken father's oscillations between violence and maudlin tenderness had not resented her lot, the adolescent who had known six years' modest and fruitful happiness did. In consequence she hated her teachers with an unjust bitter hatred that aroused the antagonism of all but the most talented. And to the questions as to her feelings and intentions which they too frequently put to her—much as incompetent cooks open the oven door unnecessarily to see how their dishes are faring—she never gave a truthful answer when a lie would serve.

Having left the home with a good record as to ability and no positive fault imputed to her character, Greta was given a job as a nursemaid. The recollection of what Polly had been to her, and a genuine sympathy with all helpless

creatures, made her perform her tasks with an excellence which won the devotion of her charges and the esteem of their parents. In consequence she began, as the months went by, to experience contentment and, having learned cowardice at the Approved Home, became inordinately anxious lest this contentment develop into a happiness whose loss would leave her worse off than before.

It was not long before this fear, like most of those she had entertained, was shown to have been justified. For the war picked her up by the scruff of her neck and flung her into a pit of loneliness such as only Polly's support could have taught her to accept with dignity if not ardour.

In consequence she often aroused the curiosity of strangers by the tears she shed in public. And since neither her delicate bones nor her good articulation suggested the Common Man, most of the strangers who witnessed her disarray were apt to murmur, as the 'bus passengers did while watching her trudge up the lane :

"Homesick? . . . wants to get back to her mum? Mm . . . one of these kids who've never had to budge before . . . oh well . . . one of these days she'll have something to worry about . . . we've all got to learn."

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

THE SOCIOLOGY OF LITERARY TASTE. L. L. SCHUECKING. The International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction. Editor, KARL MANNHEIM. Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d.

ONE SCARCELY EXPECTS a laugh from a book on this subject. However, gratitude must out, and to be offered, at this moment of the world's history, a book on literary taste which quotes Shelley *retranslated from the German* seems to me the high-water mark of humour. It is presumably unconscious, and Dr. Schuecking is not to be taken lightly. His is the familiar style of Teutonic doctrinaire tradition: "if the style of a period is described without reservation as the embodiment of the Time Spirit (*Zeitgeist*), it must be permissible to feel some doubt as to what exactly this spirit of the age is." In other words, as others have found—why bother? But "it is a striking fact that it is always so much easier to reduce the Time Spirit of past periods to a formula than to do so for a contemporary world".

At this point it is necessary to inquire into the nature of the author's "contemporary world". His book was originally published in Germany in 1931. There are signs of revision—thus, the phrase "inter-war years" occurs on p. 73. Elsewhere, we read (p. 33) of "to-day in Germany," which in 1944 is hardly to be taken literally, and suggests that the book has been slovenly translated. I only wonder it has been translated at all, paper-rationing being what it is. There is interest, no doubt, in seeing what Dr. Schuecking was propounding to German audiences on the subject of taste in 1931. The influence of "the family as a cosy intellectual unit" was dwindling, but "in Germany the public library attempts to retain something of the family-spirit" (p. 72), no doubt with something of that "where required, clear-sighted organization of the laity" (p. 76) which is to restore æsthetic conviction.

In the main, he has (naturally) a down on aristocracy, and equally an up on the middle-classes. The aristocrat's "ideal of life is intellectualized" and "property implies a permanent temptation to the enjoyment of life" (these are faults); "his characteristic style of living makes him anti-individualistic" and we hear of "the aristocratic and therefore unoccupied woman". On the other hand, "Art had played in the life of the aristocracy the part of a decorative element; in the life of the independent-minded (*sic* !) middle-class, it had the more exalted task of serving as herald and prophet of the highest and profoundest thought of mankind". That of Ruskin, for instance? And no doubt the decline of British drama with the advent of the middle-classes does not matter. The answer is, of course, that there was a connection between the rise of the middle-classes and the ascent to the throne of Hanoverians, but Dr. Schuecking does not see this answer.

Mainly concerned with German thought and writing, from time to time he favours his readers, originally German, with views on English literature which are now offered to us. Chaucer (p. 10) "ate the bread of a court at which French taste and the rather stale theories of love of past centuries were still accepted; and a good part of his literary activity ran on these lines. They still left room for the play of his sense and elegance, his taste and wit and irony" (which is a good deal, be it observed) "but not for the real element in his popularity, his wonderful sense of the Thing as It Is". We are told that "Elizabethan poetry lives in a world of ideas that no longer has anything in common with our own"—and if by that is meant the Germany of 1931, or perhaps of any era, that is true; but it needs no International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction to tell us that. What is not true is that Elizabethan poets (p. 11) "largely obtained their sustenance in their patrons' castles, where they then, at occasional

meals, 'sat below the salt,' that is to say among the servants"—such poets as Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Philip Sidney, for instance, on the one hand, or Greene, Nashe, Breton, grubbing in London, on the other? "In the theatre," however, "the works that won applause were precisely those which through their closeness to life and their realistic psychology were bound to be foreign to the taste of the aristocratic world".

For such downright howlers, due to ignorant inflexibility of thought and expression, I can see no excuse: and if there is paper to spare for their dissemination, at a time when so many valuable works are out of print, then I think it is time the Japanese too had a look in. Not only would their views on the *hari-kari* motif in *Hamlet* be at least as engaging as Dr. Schuecking saying, however ironically, "for young unmarried persons literature has always had a special significance . . . It frequently occurred" (in the nineteenth century) "that a book provided the first incentive or gave material assistance in the formation of a lifelong union." Japanese with samurai-knowledge might have something to say about his reference to a "cavalier" of the eighteenth century.

ROBERT HERRING

TRISTAN UND ISOLT. GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBURG.

German Medieval Series. Edited by AUGUST CLOSS.

Blackwell, Oxford. 8s. 6d.

HOW MANY PEOPLE in these times read medieval German? It is right that students should have a text of *Tristan und Isolt* available at a reasonable price, but the purpose of this volume is not defined. The introduction is not profound enough for scholars specializing in Arthurian research, for example, there is no reference to the work of Denis de Rougemont and his *Passion and Society*, yet a student needs more explanation than he is given of the meaning and tradition of courtly love as it was understood in the twelfth century. One suspects again that much study of early

literature is used simply as a crossword puzzle of grammatical forms.

The volume would be excellent as a prompt book for those who have a university tutor at their elbow but it needs more notes for the reader who has a slight knowledge of the subject but is not a specialist. BRYHER

THROUGH JAPANESE BARBED WIRE. GWEN PRIESTWOOD. Harrap. 8s. 6d.

THIS IS A good escape story, full of atmosphere and of the life of a doomed city before and after surrender though it is astounding that so few in Hongkong seem to be aware of danger before the fighting began. The author is a little hard, perhaps, in her judgment of people not as resourceful as herself but she behaved with the utmost courage and foresight from the start of the battle. Her escape from the internment camp to China with one other fellow-prisoner was an amazing achievement. The volume is full of small, colourful details that build up an unfamiliar landscape for the reader, the chapters of the actual getting away from Hongkong itself being particularly vivid.

MORID SPALDING

MEMORIES OF HAPPY DAYS. JULIAN GREEN. Dent. 10s. 6d.

MR. GREEN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY is the right book for this moment. As many of our readers know, he was born in Paris and lived there until he left in 1919, after service in the last war, to study at the University of Virginia, but his parents were American. He was one of the best known among the younger French novelists, and the author as well of an enchanting *Journal*, two volumes of which had appeared before 1939. This book is the first one that he has written in English.

All cities have, once in a century, a particular moment of richness and beauty, and for Paris this was less during the turbulent twenties than in that leisurely stretch from the

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Exhibition in 1900 to 1914. Mr. Green describes this atmosphere with much love and clarity, though he is not blind to some of its faults; particularly that of an educational system where children were forced to work longer hours than factory workers and almost never got out of doors. His chapter on a Paris winter in 1917 reflects to-day in an astonishing manner for as he says so truly, war is chiefly monotony, cold, and boredom.

It was a shock to be transplanted from his war experiences to the unknown "new world". The author is obviously not so happy with it as he is with his memories of France. There are some most interesting passages on his method of work and on his first books, a delightful account of his first meeting with André Gide and of various other writers and painters.

Mr. Green returned to the States in 1940. Our quarrel is with the shortness of the volume or rather, that he should have tried to crowd into it the events of thirty years.

We should welcome more details about his childhood and the last three chapters could well have been enlarged to form a book by themselves.

BRYHER

THE BARBER'S TRADE UNION AND OTHER STORIES. MULK RAJ ANAND. Cape. 7s. 6d. net.

DR. ANAND IS not a newcomer to English letters, though his short stories may be less widely known than *The Sword and the Sickle* and some of his other novels. The present volume is a collection of nineteen short stories, all of which had previously appeared separately in various magazines.

The stories he has to tell may be fantastic, like the one of *The Maharaja and the Tortoise*, or tragic, like *The Cobbler and the Machine*, but Mr. Anand has the gift of making them plausible even to those who know nothing about India. Despite the Indian themes, atmosphere and local colour, he is perhaps the most western writer of the East. For there is a touch of irony and sarcasm about his

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writing which seems to belong to London and Paris as much as to India. *A Pair of Mustachios*, which ridicules certain aspects of the Caste system, is a perfect example of almost Parisian persiflage. Maupassant could have written the story had he been an Indian instead of a Frenchman. What distinguishes Anand from Maupassant, however, is that his stories cannot be taken at their face value only. For he is not a mere story teller, he is a poet as well. There runs a fine poetic streak through his work, and the poesy is by no means confined to the three prose poems included in the book. Some of his metaphors and simile, both original and brilliant, will be savoured by the more fastidious readers.

ALFRED PERLÈS

PUBLICATIONS

IT IS PLEASANT to welcome back both *Wales* (edited by Keidrych Rhys, 2s. 6d.) and *The Welsh Review* (edited by Gwyn Jones, 2s. 6d.). Each, in the June issue, pays generous tribute to the late Alun Lewis—*Wales* in verse from Vernon Watkins, Brenda Chamberlain, and John Ormond Thomas, with a short prose appreciation by George Ewart Evans; *The Welsh Review* with an appreciation by the Editor and a story and section of poems from India by the dead writer. Gwyn Jones also includes Jack Jones ("A Gallery of Grand Chaps"), W. C. Devereux ("Wales and Industry"), a good story by the late Geraint Goodwin, and a translation of the fifth Duino Elegy, with commentary, by B. J. Morse.

On the whole, *Wales*, which has grown thicker, seems less experimental than before. This may be partly through the absence of many young men overseas. The editor is able to indulge his hobby with another batch of Poems from the Forces, but most space is given to articles; Welsh National Wildlife, Early Iron Age Discovery (Sir Cyril Fox), Wales and America (John Cowper Powys), Towards

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Robert Melville on *Rousseau and Chirico*.

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a Welsh Theatre (Lord Howard de Walden), Was St. David Ever Canonized? (Rev. Silas M. Harris), and Robert Graves (still tiresomely truculent) on bardic mythology.

A newcomer, *Scottish Art and Letters* (editors, R. Crombie Saunders and J. D. Fergusson, 5s.) is less rigidly "nationalist" than its Welsh contemporaries and so may reach a public which justifies its higher price. In addition to articles on Scottish education, music and theatre, there are also Robert Melville writing with distinction on Rousseau and Chirico, and J. F. Hendry on myth in Joyce; a characteristic story by Fred Urquhart, and poems by, among others, Adam Drinan, the late William Soutar and Maurice Lindsay (who contributes a beautiful *Earl Magnus before Haakon on Egilsay*, based on an incident in the Orkneyinga Saga). For future issues there are announced Edith Sitwell on "Some Scottish Poetry", Dr. Henry Farmer on "Scottish Instrumental Music in the Eighteenth Century", poetry by Hugh MacDiarmid, and reproductions of work by East Coast painters. This quarterly is well got up, though I find the cover unattractive.

In apparent opposition to these, *The New Saxon Pamphlets* (edited by John Atkin) have "shaken off the English literary inferiority complex", which we thus learn existed. The first issue "won't subscribe to the view that to write good poetry you must be a Celt", but at the same time announces that "most of the contributions are stories. This is because the English story is more vital and interesting to-day than the English poem." So where are we? Lost among labels! Some people are so busy tying them on, they forget to pack their luggage. The best story here is by Reginald Moore.

Much the same careless expression of muddled thought is shown by the sponsors of *Rhyme and Reason* (edited by John Martin, 1s.). A covering letter regrets that "there are serious omissions in the collection—due to the dispersal



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of poets on the World's Fighting fronts. We felt, however, that it was important to publish what was available now rather than wait indefinitely while we made this collection more representative". A certain amount of waiting was done, however, for the letter, originally dated 22nd December, 1943, is over stamped 23rd March, 1944. The "representation" includes Adam Drinan, John Manifold, Francis Scarfe, Jack Lindsay, John Pudney, and is intended to show that "the lyricism, the romantic passion for which the poets of these islands were loved has been re-born and blended with a revolutionary imagination and an inspired realism which is the counterpart in literature of the physical creation of the new, socialist, unshackled society". So now we know ! But I don't believe it. A further guide to the audience for whom this word-rattling is meant may be found in the statement that Yeats's "Easter, 1916" is included because it is hoped "that through this new kind of booklet many shall come to know this poem who otherwise would never have had the opportunity of gaining increase from it". To which anyone who feels moved to put out a pamphlet called *Tut*, has my blessing. *Dint* seems a misprint for *Don't*, and a collective name for a good many other brochures which have come my way could be *Stuff and Nonsense* ; or perhaps just Nonsense, having no stuffing.

Less pretentious than these and pleasing in its own right is *Here To-day* (edited by Pierre Edmunds and Roland Mathias, 1s. 3d.). This is not an addition to the "little magazines", but is "an attempt to apply certain features of their technique to the circumstances of a provincial town". The town is Reading, and a useful article is on the Reading Repertory Company (it will be noticed that interest in theatre is a feature of most of these publications). Roland Mathias contributes further to interest with a study of Mary Russell Mitford.

R. H.